

Good morning, Chairman Birong and members of your committee.

My name is Dean Gilmore; I'm a past Asst. Chief of the New Haven Volunteer Fire Department serving them for 48 years and for the past two years serving the City of Vergennes Fire Department. I represent Addison County Firefighters Association on the Vermont State Firefighters Association Executive board and represent the Vermont State Firefighters Association as chair of their Governmental Affairs Committee. I have served in the capacity of a town fire wardens assistant and warden.

This proposal was discussed at the last VSFA executive board meeting on January 18th and supported. There are many cases throughout the state where a fire warden is appointed by the select board and the person is not even able to navigate an incident or trained to manage an incident. There are many cases where the selectboard making appointments have no clue what the duties of a warden are.

Bringing the rules that were established in 1904 up to date only makes sense, make the fire chief the warden, he or she will have to deal with fires kindled that get out of control, he or she are in a better position to educate the general public on the rules and liabilities and are in a better position to submit required reports which would also result in more accurate data on actual fires for Forest and Parks which I believe could increase the funding from the federal government.

There are towns that do not have their own fire department but appoint a warden that has no firefighting experience or training. Moving that position to the chief of the department that covers these towns gives them a better handle on permits being issued.

We commend Forest and Parks on making the effort to clean up outdated rules and striving to work with the fire service when we have these out-of-control fires.

Thank you, Chairman Birong, for allowing me to speak before you and your committee today.

Respectfully

Past Asst. Chief Dean J. Gilmore Chr.

VSFA Gov. Affairs Committee